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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action mailed October 13, 2006 has been carefully considered. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim 15 has been amended to further particularly point out and distinctly claim subject matter regarded as the invention. Support for these changes may be found in the specification, page 16, lines 1-18. No new matter has been added.

Record of Interview

On December 5, 2006, an interview was conducted by telephone between Examiner Pandya, Examiner Coburn, and Adrienne Yeung, Reg. No. 44,000. Applicant and Applicant's Attorney thanks the Examiners for granting this interview. The details of the interview are set forth in the Interview Summary document made of record by Examiner Coburn.

The 35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection

Claims 15-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over a single reference Acres (US Patent 6,565,434) among which claim 15 is an independent claim. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

According to the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (M.P.E.P.) § 2143,

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, not in the applicant's disclosure.

Specifically, the Office Action contends that a "detailed reading of Acres by an artisan of ordinary skill would teach all the claim limitations of the claims." Applicant respectfully disagrees for the reasons, among others, set forth below.

Amended Claim 15 provides for “establishing a single connection between the communication interface and a plurality of remote servers in a gaming machine network.” The Specification provides that one “advantage of using a common network communication protocol, ... able to transport multiple proprietary protocols, in system 50 is that the number of connection into a gaming machine may be reduced. For example, in Figure 1A, gaming machine 2a is connected to the network 60 via connection 57a.” (Specification, page 16, lines 9-13). Thus, only a single communication connection is formed between the remote servers and the communication interface thereby reducing the number of connections into the gaming machine.

Acres does not teach “establishing a single connection between the communication interface and a plurality of remote servers in a gaming machine network” as claimed in amended claim 15. Rather, as illustrated in Fig. 7, the “machine communication interface (MCI) 356 ... is interfaced to several peripheral components” as well as several other devices such as the bank controller and third party accounting system. (Col. 20, lines 25-27). Thus, Acres does not teach having a “single connection between the communication interface and the plurality of remote servers in a gaming machine network.”

Furthermore, the Office Action states that “Acres in column 21 lines 48-60 discloses multiple communication ports and numerous digital input and output ports. And Column 17 lines 54-60 and column 52 lines 11-12, discloses communications protocols used by a gaming machine function on the machine, wherein Acres discloses multiple communication protocols, however accordingly it would also have been obvious for Acres to implement multiple communication ports to make it accessible for communication with a network, wherein the machines are adapted for communication using the communications protocols via communication ports.” Applicant respectfully disagrees.

A further reading of the citations provided by the examiner indicates that the digital input and output ports are not, in fact, multiple communication ports to the gaming machine. As illustrated in Figure 7, the digital input and output ports form the MCI communicate with peripheral devices and not with the gaming device communication port. Moreover in, Col. 47, line 6-8, Acres states, “Referring to FIG. 7, the MCI collects information from the gaming device over the RS-422 serial link 26 using a suitable protocol such ASP 1000.” This sentence seems to indicate that

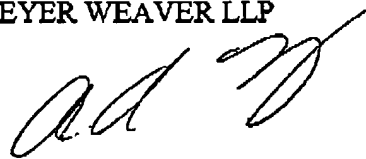
the MCI and the master gaming controller communicate using a single communication protocol. Thus, it does not appear that Acres teaches “configuring a first communication port included in a communication interface to communicate data according to a first communication protocol used by a first gaming machine function on the gaming machine wherein the master gaming controller on the gaming machine is adapted for communicating using the first communication protocol via the first communication port; configuring a second communication port included in the communication interface to communicate data according to a second communication protocol used by a second gaming machine function on the gaming machine wherein the master gaming controller on the gaming machine is adapted for communicating using the second communication protocol via the second communication port” as claimed in Claim 15.

Accordingly, since there is no reasonable expectation of success that Acres will result in the claimed invention and Acres does not teach or suggest all the claim limitations, it can not be said to anticipate the claimed invention. As to dependent claims, the argument set forth above is equally applicable here. The base claims being allowable, the dependent claims must also be allowable. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully asserted that the claims are now in condition for allowance. It is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

It is believed that this Amendment places the above-identified patent application into condition for allowance. Early favorable consideration of this Amendment is earnestly solicited and Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, an interview would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
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